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An
Inaugural Dissertation
on
Podagra or Gout.
Submitted to the examination
of the
Medical Professors
in the
University of Pennsylvania
by
Wesley Brown Battell
of Dover,
State of Delaware
March 1827.

Podagra or Gout.

One of the most painful and distressing diseases to which the human system is liable is Gout.

Notwithstanding the disease has been noticed ever since the dawn of Medical Science, and much has been said by different authors concerning the cause of it, yet it still remains to be a matter unsettled, as to the true nature of the disease, and the best mode of treating it.

The term, Gout, is said to be derived from the French, goutte, a drop.

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The first of these is the
fact that the number of
cases of the disease is
increasing. This is due to
the fact that the disease is
more common in the
winter months. The second
fact is that the disease is
more common in the
lower classes of society.
The third fact is that the
disease is more common in
the cities than in the
country. The fourth fact is
that the disease is more
common in the warm
climate than in the cold
climate. The fifth fact is
that the disease is more
common in the summer
months than in the winter
months. The sixth fact is
that the disease is more
common in the young than
in the old. The seventh
fact is that the disease is
more common in the male
than in the female. The
eighth fact is that the
disease is more common in
the poor than in the rich.
The ninth fact is that the
disease is more common in
the crowded than in the
uncrowded. The tenth fact
is that the disease is more
common in the dirty than in
the clean. The eleventh
fact is that the disease is
more common in the
unhealthy than in the
healthy. The twelfth fact
is that the disease is more
common in the weak than
in the strong. The thirteenth
fact is that the disease is
more common in the
sick than in the well. The
fourteenth fact is that the
disease is more common in
the diseased than in the
healthy. The fifteenth fact
is that the disease is more
common in the diseased than
in the healthy. The
sixteenth fact is that the
disease is more common in
the diseased than in the
healthy. The seventeenth
fact is that the disease is
more common in the diseased
than in the healthy. The
eighteenth fact is that the
disease is more common in
the diseased than in the
healthy. The nineteenth
fact is that the disease is
more common in the diseased
than in the healthy. The
twentieth fact is that the
disease is more common in
the diseased than in the
healthy.

The ancients believed that
ally, or at least most of the diseases ac-
companied with swelling or tumefaction,
were attributable to a flow of morbid
humours to the parts affected, which
was called a defluxion, and the
defluxion or rheum, was denomina-
ted, Cold, Hot, &c. according to the na-
ture of the different symptoms. And to
this cause was ascribed by the
Arabian writers, the various diseases
of the eyes, which were called Gutta
serena, Gutta obscura &c. according to
their different appearances. ^

Perhaps, considers
gout to be a vitiated disposition
of the very minute vessels and nerves
in the body, from their too great
straitness, rigidity; and also of the

1
The first thing I did was to
go and see the old man
and his wife. They were
very kind and showed me
all the things they had
collected. I was very
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man's collection of
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liquido which nourishes the nerves
from its acrimony and greater
tenacity. -

^{iv} Hoffman says that it is a
saline tartarous substance, whilst
some consider it a corrosive bil-
ious salt, others an Acid, an earth
an Alkali &c.

It has generally been
thought that the disease depends
upon a certain morbid matter
always present in the system; and
that this matter by certain causes
thrown upon the joints and other
parts, produces the several phenom-
ena of the disease. -

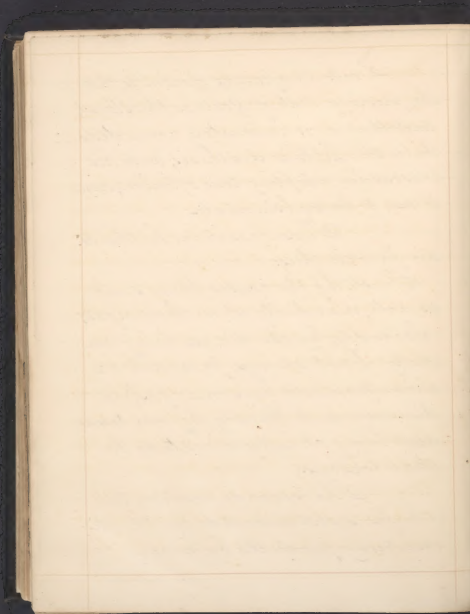
Doct. Chapman's opinion is, that the primary seat of Goats is the Stomach, and that it is intimately connected with the Lithic diathesis; and his reasons for adopting this opinion, seem to me, to be substantial.

These positions he thinks are proven thus:

First, by the causes being such as act principally upon that organ,

Secondly, by the disease being generally if not always, preceded or accompanied by some gastric disorder; and thirdly, by our remedies being chiefly, directed to that viscus.

The second position, he thinks substantiated, by the disease being produced by nearly



similar caused with jaundice, the
by the effusions in the liver, some
would be the same in the ^{some} of
the urinary calculi.

There are a great
many arguments which will prove
the correctness of Doct. Chapman's
opinion, and if I compare his opinion
properly, I cannot do otherwise than
agree with his ideas on this subject.

What I understand by the
Stomach being the primary seat
of the disease, may be thus explained.
It exists in the first place;
but it exists in the system a pre-
disposition to the disease; and that
this organ being acted upon by
certain stimulants is excited pri-
marily into action, from which



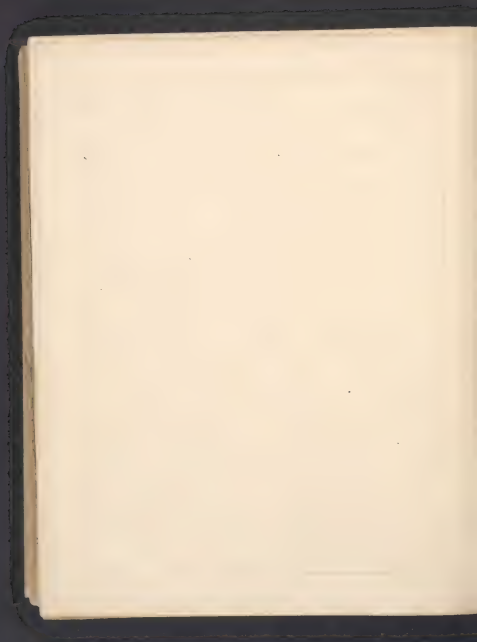
actions proceeds in the same manner
as the disease, or gout.

I believe that these
impressions are such as always pro-
duce debility of the directly concerned
limbs; and think also that this dis-
taste or indisposition to go on, some-
times exists in such a degree, that
the smallest deviation from strict
temperance is sufficient to make
it aversive itself.

Thus I think sometimes
to have with some who have been
in long, tedious, winter and who are
generally, quick, temperate & know
of no other way of accounting for
these anomalous cases, that are
sometimes met with in practice.
The second necessary thing



of the fact, that it is not necessary
that our parents are diseased, and
disposed of a particular kind, in
order to know them. If given families
gamblers; have we not seen children
of the same parents exposed, and the
same time to evil; under the same
or similar circumstances, contract
diseases of a different character?
one, for instance will have a scurvy
in other Rheumatism; and perhaps
a third will be taken with Syphilis
or Typhus. These we all know are
diseases of different systems and tex-
tures. — Now how are these phenomena
to be accounted for, but by concluding
that it must be owing to dissimila-
ry, or peculiarity of structure in the
parent or system, which renders it



more inclined to take our dissensions
from the other side, which is a defect
of our own systems, we do not inherit
from our parents.

I do not wish to be
understood to say, that we cannot
inherit dissensions from our parents.
but I wish to prove, that we are fre-
quently liable to dissents, independent
of our parents, and that, notwithstanding,
generally hereditary, is not always
so, and that it may occur in persons
young, it cannot be recommended, or
in any other way, than the one, in
which I have endeavoured to ex-
plain.



It is the opinion of some practitioners
that women never have gout.

Hippocrates believed that women
seldom had this disease, and never
before the disappearance of the cata-
menia. Cullen says it attacks
especially the male sex, but sometimes
though more rarely the females.

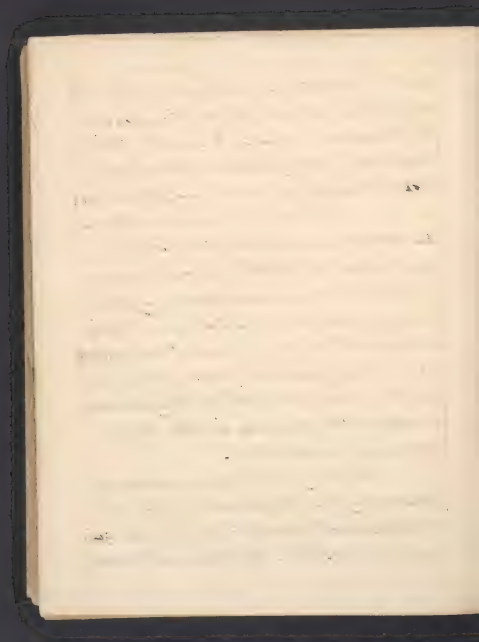
Entertaining the
pathological view of the disease
which I have endeavoured to ex-
plain, I cannot believe, that gout
is at all influenced by sex, but that
if women (in general) were to indulge
in the same excesses and expose
themselves to the occasional or ex-
citing causes, they would be equal-
ly liable to the disease; That the
diathesis is just as likely to exist



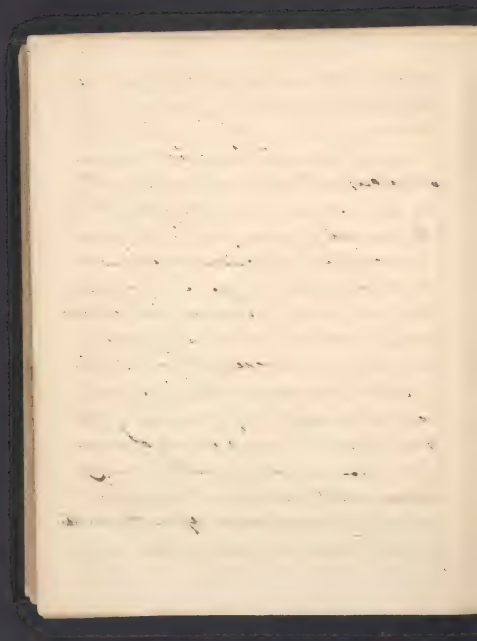
in the female, as male sex; and it is
only necessary to expose themselves
to the same causes, to make this
disordering complaint develop
itself in all its various phenomena.

I cannot see how those
Authors can establish the fact, by
any train of pathological reason-
ing, that women are, from any pecu-
liarity of structure, liable to this
disease, than men; and that eunuchs
are entirely exempt from gout: un-
less they can prove that the prima-
ry seat of the disease, is the male
organs of generation.

It may be looked upon as
presuming too much, in a young^{no} and
inexperienced man, to set up his opin-
ion, in opposition to older and more



experienced, persons in the profession
and I hope I shall be pardoned if I
have differed in opinion with all,
or any of you, who have been my in-
structors, and who have also spared
no expense or labour, to instil into
the minds of your pupils, the correct
principles of the optensive science
to which you belong. I hope further
that you will look upon what I have
ventured to say, on this subject, as
not having proceeded from a dis-
position to advance opinions, inim-
ical to those of any member of the
faculty, but from a spirit of in-
novation — and should I be ^{wrong} ~~wrong~~,
I am not the first ^{who} have erred in
venturing an opinion upon the nature
of this most singular disease.



But has been distinguished into
a great many varieties as Kodagra
in the nose, riveted in the foot;
Spiragra, in the hands; Pochyagra,
in the elbow; Gonagra, in the knee;
Dantagra in the foot; Pichagra,
in the articulations of the clavicles;
Mangra, in the articulations of the humeri;
Kachagra, in the spine of the
back and Tonotagra in the large
tendon. Now I think it evident
from the many varieties into which
the name distinguished parts, that
the ancients could have known
no distinction between the words
an thematism; or if they did
thought it unnecessary to make
any as these two words resemble
each other in a great many re-



subject. I think it would have
in the foregoing series are attended
to, that generally, there will be but
little difficulty in distinguishing
gout, from Rheumatism, altho there
may occur cases wherein we may
find some difficulty in making
a just discrimination.

In the first place we should endeavor
to ascertain whether any, fixed
or predispositions exist; Secondly,
we should be very particular in describ-
ing the symptoms which mark the
predecessor of the Lity; and thirdly,
we should enquire into the recur-
rences of the disease, the parts af-
fected, and whether there are sub-
ject to any other disease before the
Lity, and the nature of that disease



It may should have existed, all of which
circumstances are usually different
in the two diseases. In gout we are
told that the pain generally attacks
the smaller joints, and is not equal to
that in rheumatism; but when this
does take place, it generally attacks
the corresponding limb, or perhaps
some of the viscera; we are also
told that the parts are more red
and swollen than in Rheumatism and
that the digestive symptoms, which
rarely precede inflammation, are some-
times present, several days before
a debility of the general system sets in.

Gout comes on more
frequently in the spring of the year
and in the beginning of winter; and
the period of life at which it most



commonly abates is from this cause
to Sarcos, when it is less common
than this it may be from a disease
owing to the diathesis existing in an
inconsumable acid or to intestinal
necrosis.

It is said that gout does not like
some chronic diseases wear itself
out by repeated attacks, but acquires
strength with each returning fit, & it
with regard to the variety of parts
which it attacks, such as to the degree
of suffering and duration of the fit.

Gout is divided into several
forms, as Tonic and Atonic, or Regular
and Irregular, & is too violent and
misplaced.

I believe the principal cir-
cumstance which distinguishes the



regular, from the other varieties of the disease, is the inflammatory affection of the joints; Of the second or atonic form of the disease, there are two varieties: the retrocedent and misplaced.

A paroxysm of regular gout sometimes comes without any warning, but most frequently, I believe, the dyspeptic symptoms, with an unusual coldness of the feet and legs, numbness or a prickling sensation along the extremities, precedes the attack; Lapsitude and fatigue are experienced in a great degree upon the least exercise, the urine pallid and the bowels costive.

An attack most commonly comes on at night, or about two or three



6 clock in the morning; the patient sometimes goes to bed in tolerable health, and after three or four hours is awaked by the excruciating pain which has attacked the joint of the large toe, heel, or as happens sometimes the whole foot; this increases in violence and is succeeded by rigors and other febrile symptoms with great throbbing and severe inflammation in the part. - Sometimes both feet are affected, but most commonly but one at a time.

Towards day the pain subsides a little and the patient falls asleep; then a gentle sweat breaks out and terminates the paroxysm. a number of which constitute a fit of gout. -

This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf from an old book. The paper has a visible texture and some minor blemishes, including small dark spots and faint smudges, particularly near the bottom edge. The overall tone is a warm, off-white or light beige.

First treatment

18th. view of the tumor that tells
they cannot always, & may be en-
tirely eradicated from the system, & it
is certain that much may be done
towards lessening the violence, & so
shortening the duration of the cure, and
by this means relieving the suffer-
ings of our patients, by other remedies
than those which attend on the hemorrhagic
wound on Valeriana & Scilla. —

As the foregoing would seem to
be one of the most important indica-
tions in the treatment of scab, both
with a view to removing the gastric
affection and relieving pain.

on this occasion, as well as in many
other cases, points out the view we
should pursue, in procuring the termination

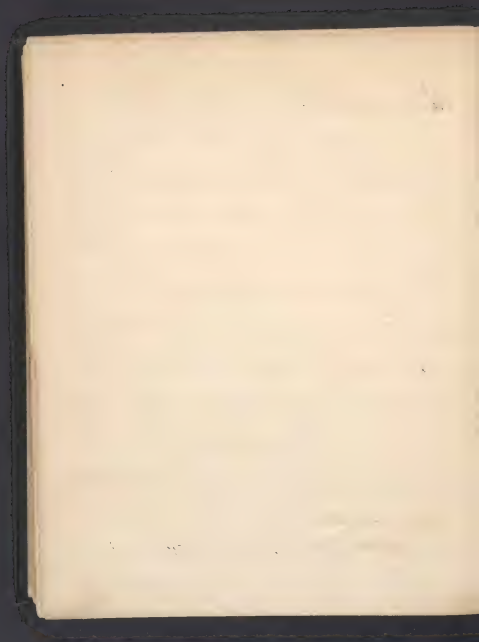


the list is a continuous series of
Protera. marini. -

It is thought best to commence
the history with insect orders. Entomology
is introduced by Chaubert and Marschall
strongly in some cases, where the in-
tention is historical, and the journal
towards it, he begins to, proceeds
the history, by venenation.

The various species he reports as
being in the same time and the nature
of the diseases demand it. For this
purpose the most realistic articles have
been used, among which are, *Scammony*,
Mentha and *Antirrhinum*, all of which
I have no doubt are highly serviceable
and may be indispensable to the cure
of the disease.

Emotions have also been used



in the treatment of gout, and no
doubt but they are in some cases of
great importance, where there is much
gouty disorder.

Leeching is also of great
advantage in the treatment of gout,
and is considered by some next in
importance to purging; but we should
never resort to this, until the violence
of the paroxysm is somewhat sub-
sided.

Purgatives are also indicated by
the copious discharges of urine which
have been observed as critical in gout,
as well as their acknowledged ability
in subduing inflammatory action; ac-
cordingly in rheumatism.

It is said that all the indica-
tions which have been mentioned may



be met, in the various portions of the
European Medicines, that it not only
purges rectum, but sometimes, pushes
sweats, and almost invariably induces
the urinary discharge. The composition
of this medicine is still, I believe un-
known, or at least there is no certainty
of its discovery. -

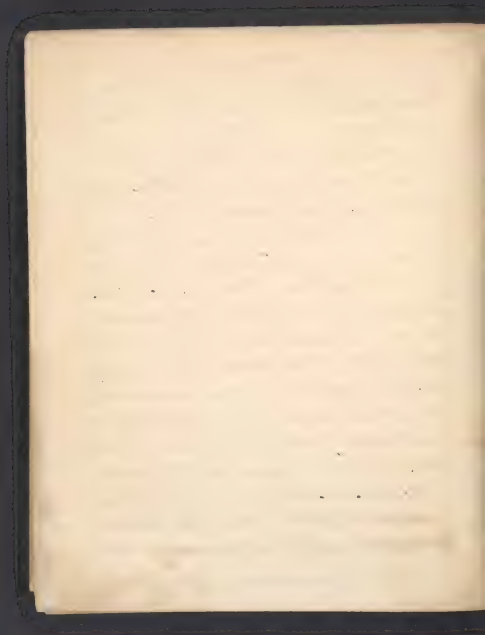
Warm applications to the in-
flamed parts are very useful and success
is followed with. Scadamale com-
monly very useful a preparation of
phosphoric acid, in the proportion of 1 part
of the alkali to 3 of Acid of Benzoic acid
is to be used and applied to the
part affected. I know of no young gen-
tlemen in America who is not yet to
this disease, who use the spirit of ben-
zoic, and draw their nature is well



give him the least relief; he was
much as a sign of this in the twenty
four hours.

Wrapping the in hands warm
in flannel, wool, or cotton will
sometimes give great relief.

Drillers man sometimes
be necessary where there is danger
of a retrocession; but in such cases
the stimulus should be resorted
to, as the musk juice, Ether, Rhium,
Carbonate of Ammonia, Hot toddy,
&c. The Lancel must in some cases be used,
even whilst we are giving the stimulants,
particularly when the disease attacks
the stomach or heart, and the pulse
is depressed. When the head is affected
producing Apoplexy it should be treated in
the same way as apoplexy from any other



cause. - when it attacks the lungs it produces asthmatic or pneumonic symptoms and should be treated by the remedies for those diseases. -

When the kidneys are affected general & local bleeding, warm bath and warm fomentations, Laudanum or opium, Tinct of Colchicum &c. should be used. - when the Heart is affected, generally, the symptoms of Angina pectoris are felt, as palpitations &c. in this case, bleeding and antispasmodics are demanded, and blisters to the extremities. -

Misplaced Gout, should be treated in the same way as the retrocedent form of the disease, as it is the same thing, but has neglected to make its appearance in the

1
[Faint, illegible handwritten text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

jointo previous to its attacking
some other part.

We should treat the
atonic form of the disease by
restoring tone to the stomach and
invigorating the system.

This should be
commenced by evacuating the
alimentary Canal and by Tonics,
such as Steel, Bark and many
of the other tonics which are in
use, particularly the bitter tonics.

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